

# **PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

WILMAPCO Conference Room, February 29, 2016

## **ROLL CALL**

### **Members Present:**

Wes Avera, Centreville Civic League  
Bruce Brunoizzi, City of Wilmington  
Dave Carter, Southern New Castle County Alliance  
Darlene Cole, Elderly and Disabled Transit Advisory Committee  
William Dunn, New Castle County Civic League  
Joe Mitchell, Cecil County  
Peggy Schultz, League of Women Voters  
Gail Seitz, City of New Castle  
Barry Shotwell, 7/40 Alliance  
Vic Singer, Civic League of New Castle County  
Javier Torrijos, Delaware Hispanic Commission  
Antonio Valenzuela, City of Wilmington (Chair)

### **Absent:**

Pat Folk, Cecil County  
Dick Janney, Southern New Castle County  
Jim Lardear, DE State Chamber of Commerce\*  
Bill Lower, Committee of 100  
Jeff Peters, Pike Creek Valley Civic League  
Tom Posatko, Delmarva Rail Passenger Association  
Glenn Pusey, Bear Glasgow Council  
Brett Saddler, Claymont Renaissance Development Corporation  
Charles Shaw, AARP  
Francis Swift, GHADA  
Dave Tancredi, Milltown-Limestone Civic Alliance  
Frank Vari, Chesapeake City

*\* Reserve PAC Members*

### **Guests:**

None.

### **Staff Members:**

Dan Blevins, Principal Planner  
Heather Dunigan, Principal Planner  
Jacob Thompson, Transportation Planner  
Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director

Minutes prepared by Janet Butler

Antonio Valenzuela, PAC Chair, called the meeting to order at

**7:00 PM**

### **1. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

**7:02 PM**

**ACTION:** On motion by Mr. Carter seconded by Mr. Singer the PAC approved the December 14, 2015, minutes.

Motion passed

(2/29/16-01)

Mr. Brunozzi asked has anyone found out anything about the DeIDOT barricade situation he had mentioned in the public comment section at the December 14, 2015 PAC meeting because DeIDOT still allows barricades to be put up weeks before work starts and they allow the barricades to remain up weeks after the work is done. Ms. Zegeye said that information was communicated to Council members, but she hasn't heard back from them yet.

**2. Public Comment:**

**7:05 PM**

Peggy Schultz said the PAC is invited to the League of Women Voters event, at the Duncan Center, 500 W. Lockerman Street, Dover, Delaware, on Wednesday, March 23, 2016, 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The cost is \$25.00, which covers lunch. The program is entitled: "Access to Justice: Current Issues in Delaware's General Assembly." Ms. Schultz also thanked Heather Dunigan for her excellent Transit Oriented Development (TOD) presentation to the League of Women Voters. Ms. Schultz said in the Governor's Council on Energy, 2009 Report, there were major recommendations from the transportation workshop to encourage TOD. A number of measures were introduced to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and carbon emissions.

**3. Executive Director's Report:**

**7:10 PM**

Tigist Zegeye said Council met on January 14, 2016. Council approved four FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendments including Elkton Road, MD Line to Casho Mill Road project; SR1 Median Barrier Replacement project; Beech Street Emergency Generators; and I-95/I-295/I-495 Interstate High Mast Lighting Improvements. They also released the FY 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for public comments. Presentations included the SR 141 Land Use and Transportation Plan, Public Opinion Survey, Wilmington Transit Moving Forward - Phase II, and the 4th Street Walkable Community Workshop.

Ms. Zegeye shared the following public outreach information:

- Staff attended the following workshops: Brandywine Streetscape, Southbridge Streetscape Phase II Concept Planning, Port of Wilmington Strategic Master Plan, and Northeast Corridor (NEC) Future Public Hearing.
- The Wilmington Initiatives (WI) Public Workshop was held, which was very successful with 50 attendees.
- Staff made a presentation to the League of Women Voters of NCC on Transit Oriented Development (TOD).
- Mr. John Sisson, WILMAPCO Council Chair, is the member of the revamped Pedestrian Council, which met in Dover, and Ms. Zegeye is the alternate.
- The joint Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Public Workshop was held on February 24, 2016, with DeIDOT at the Newark Library.
- Staff is continuing to work on Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs and events with Stubbs, Claymont, Mt. Pleasant, and Elbert Palmer elementary schools.
- Staff is working with DNREC to develop anti-idling and air quality awareness materials and an outreach program to elementary schools.
- The Red Clay Scenic Byways Overlay Standards project is moving forward and WILMAPCO is working with New Castle County on the draft report and preparing for spring advisory committee meeting.

- The Route 9 Corridor Master Plan is underway, and staff expects to have a presentation at the next PAC meeting.
- The Newark Regional Transportation Center (NRTC) project team has weekly conference calls to address issues as they arise and to keep the project on schedule.
- Staff attended the Wilmington Transit Moving Forward (WTMF) project management committee meeting on February 17<sup>th</sup>.
- The Walnut Street Improvement concept plan was completed, and is moving into design and construction.
- Staff is waiting for DeIDOT to provide information on the Glasgow Avenue project to present at a public workshop in the spring.

Mr. Carter asked if the Route 9 Corridor Master Plan project is close to being done. Ms. Zegeye said the Route 9 project team has just held an Advisory Committee meeting and stakeholder interviews. Existing conditions were mapped out and handed off to consultants, which means Task 1 was completed. Staff will make a presentation at the April PAC meeting. Mr. Carter asked if it will include the Port Study. Ms. Zegeye said not yet. Ms. Dunigan said by April we expect to receive the Port Study recommendations.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**4. Approval of the Public Outreach for FY 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) 7:20 PM**

Heather Dunigan said WILMAPCO's public outreach methods included the joint FY 2017-2020 TIP Workshop held with DeIDOT on February 24, 2016, an e-mail blast sent to 10,000 News Journal subscribers, WDEL and WXCY radio ads, articles in the WILMAPCO Transporter newsletter and E-news, and press releases sent to various media outlets, which resulted in a Middletown Transcript article.

Two of the public comments included: 1) Maryland Rail -- The MARC Maintenance Facility. This project includes the provisions of the loop rail turn-around facility to be located near the existing facility-forwarded to MDOT for response; and 2) Christiana River Bridge – A request for the bridge to allow access for the Kalmar Nyckel ship to pass through; project design is complete, and while ship access was considered, the height clearance does not allow access for the Kalmar Nyckel ship due to other obstructions along the river.

Ms. Dunigan said some of the other public comments from the recent TIP public workshop were pedestrian infrastructure projects are good, but, the infrastructure still needs more improvements. There are concerns with the number of pedestrian traffic accidents; the Industrial Track Greenway is an excellent project; mass transit projects are appreciated; Delaware needs bike infrastructure for commuting purposes not just trails; and shoulders are often designated as bike paths but, aren't cleaned as well as they could be.

Mr. Valenzuela asked about the relationship between WILMAPCO and Bike Delaware. Ms. Dunigan said it is an advocacy organization and lobbying group. Bike Delaware reaches out to WILMAPCO for data and information; however, WILMAPCO doesn't participate in lobbying. Ms. Zegeye said they are also members of the Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group.

Ms. Seitz asked if the Christina River Bridge has bike lanes. Ms. Dunigan said yes, the new roadway bridge has bike paths; and there is another bridge that is exclusively bike-pedestrian. She added the Garashes Lane project will tie Southbridge to the Riverfront.

Mr. Brunozzi said he did not get an answer to his question regarding why the Christina River Bridge that has one lane each way, which doesn't seem logical because he feels it should be two lanes each way, and eventually the bridge could become obsolete. Ms. Dunigan said she can get a report for him that shows the options. Ms. Zegeye also said she can give him contact information for Ray Petrucci, DeIDOT Project Manager.

Mr. Dunn said none of the TIP projects refer to the Stanton area, yet several intersections and road segments are in failure. Ms. Zegeye said the Congestion Management System (CMS) team is analyzing all of the intersections throughout New Castle County, and DeIDOT is addressing these issues in other projects. She added Mr. Gene Donaldson, DeIDOT, could address these issues at a future PAC meeting.

Ms. Schultz said a Route 896 bikeway will go through the park, next to Big Pond, and DeIDOT wants to make a wide path, but, another group wants a thinner path. She asked if WILMAPCO knows about this project. Ms. Dunigan said yes, the Tri-Valley Trail is a State Park project. Ms. Dunigan said she will provide her with David Bartoo's contact information because he is the contact with State Parks.

Mr. Singer suggested doing some experiments to get data where there are heavily traveled roads and transit, and to offer free transit during peak hours to see if this would attract more people to transit such as on Concord Pike, Route 40, Route 4, and Kirkwood Highway. Ms. Zegeye said the heavy routes such as Route 6 and 40 are the routes that generate a lot of money for Delaware Transit Corporation (DTC). Mr. Singer added it raises an interesting point: How is the public served at minimum public cost or minimum government cost.

Mr. Valenzuela asked PAC members to return the focus of the discussion to the TIP public comments and outreach.

Ms. Dunigan said some other comments from the workshop included reducing the impact of emissions that impact flood zones and widening Frazer Road in the Bear area to handle the increases in traffic. In addition, there was a comment regarding researching how the Netherlands was able to make a city center completely car-free and how quality of life has improved there since the 1970s. She added all of these comments were forwarded to the WILMAPCO Council and responses will be provided to the inquirers.

**ACTION:** On motion by Ms. Schultz seconded by Mr. Carter the PAC approved FY 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Outreach.

Motion passed with one abstention.

**(2-29-16-02)**

**PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

**5. SR 141 20-Year Transportation & Land Use Plan**

**7:30 PM**

Mr. Blevins said SR141 20-Year Land Use and Transportation Plan is a collaborative effort between DeIDOT, New Castle County, and WILMAPCO that looks at a portion of

the RT141 corridor between SR2/Kirkwood Highway and US 202, Concord Pike, which supplies mobility within major employment centers and serves local and regional trips.

The June 2015 information session resulted in initial stakeholder input, and approximately 65 people attended. They focused mainly on current conditions of the corridor, including traffic, land use, and safety. In October 2015, staff held the second informational session to get additional stakeholder input and approximately 55 people attended. Discussions, presentations, and surveys centered on existing transportation conditions; potential development; draft vision, and goals; and how land use can be organized, such as with town centers, village centers, corporate campuses, and institutional campuses.

Project goals were developed, which included a vision for the corridor, and resulted in consensus-based recommendations; promoted alternative travel modes and options; created a comprehensive public involvement process; and developed a sustainable plan to guide transportation and land use policy decisions for the next two decades.

The DeIDOT Transportation Management Center (TMC) signal re-timing project provided data including before and after comparisons between April and September 2015. Bluetooth and Wavetronics data showed how technology can make improvements in the corridor and indicated two minutes were shaved off northbound and southbound also improved because of signal re-timing, which was a significant change, especially regarding the Tyler McConnell Bridge.

Comments from the informational sessions indicated this work was a prelude to re-developing scenic corridors. Although the public comments indicated travel along the corridor is generally good; the exception was the Tyler McConnell Bridge and the Du Pont Experimental Station light at the bridge exit. The consensus indicated that this plan would cause unchecked redevelopment and crowding along the Route 141 corridor surrounding the Barley Mill Plaza, and many citizens were skeptical about big box development.

The third meeting will be held in late spring, where staff will compile comments and present refined vision and goals. This will be the final meeting because there is little desire with WILMAPCO's planning partners, DeIDOT, and New Castle County, to move into the next phase of the project, where staff would test alternatives, develop the preferred approach, and develop a corridor monitoring/plan implementation process. The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) project request included developing the goals and vision, and there is no more funding for the project at this time.

Mr. Dunn asked shouldn't we have a complete evaluation of major arteries in New Castle County, and if you are two-thirds through a project, shouldn't you finish it. Mr. Blevins replied yes.

Mr. Singer asked the following questions: How many data gathering transmissions, how many miles long, and how much did the devices cost. Mr. Blevins said there were six Bluetooth and four Wavetronics devices; it was 8.6 miles long; and the devices cost \$4,000 each.

Mr. Singer also asked in order to maintain conditions on a monitoring basis and have the system adjust according to the traffic, would just the permanent installations be

sufficient. Mr. Blevins said the Bluetooth devices are permanent. He added the loop detectors are collecting volume that is part of the traffic management center on those locations, and they are able to measure the data over time. Wavetronics can show how many trucks are traversing road segments.

Ms. Schultz asked who is overseeing this project. Ms. Zegeye said the WILMAPCO Council is overseeing the project. The UPWP request for the project came from New Castle County. The partners and contacts are WILMAPCO, Tigist Zegeye; New Castle County Land Use Manager; and DelDOT, Marc Tudor. She added the implementing agency needs to take the project further.

## **6. Northern Claymont Area Master Plan**

**8:00 PM**

Ms. Dunigan said planning partners for the North Claymont Area Master Plan include: WILMAPCO; New Castle County; Claymont Renaissance Development Corporation; Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination; Delaware Department of Transportation; DART First State, Delaware Department of Natural Resources; and Delaware Economic Development Office. She said there has been tremendous interest from the public. There have been 400 people on the Facebook page and more than 100 people attended the first public meeting held at Archmere Academy.

The consultant team consists of Rhodeside & Harwell (Planning/Design/Community Engagement); WRA (Multi-Modal Transportation Planning/Engineering); and W-ZHA (Market and Economic Analysis). The project study area is located in the northeastern part of New Castle County and includes the Claymont Train Station, the Claymont Steel plant, and the Tri-State Mall. The master plan encompasses economic development, environmental and open space issues, and transportation and land use issues.

Ms. Schultz asked why Tri-State Mall is such a wonderful bus stop while the mall isn't very successful. Ms. Dunigan said it functions mainly as a transfer point for buses for several major bus routes. Ms. Seitz asked if there are schools in the study area. Ms. Dunigan said no. Mr. Dunn asked if she had seen Charlie Weymouth's plans. Ms. Dunigan said yes. Mr. Weymouth has met with her about his plans, and provided several graphic images to her.

The project team is focusing on the public visioning process and has met with a project management committee, an advisory committee, and several focus groups including community and civic groups, regional agencies, adjacent jurisdictions, property owners, developers, and industry representatives.

The key issues that came out of the meetings with stakeholders include more job access; protecting the historical elements, housing, business, recreation including a destination for entertainment, transportation concerns such as highway access and considerations for the environment.

The following draft goals and objectives were developed:

- Create a safe and welcoming community. -- Objectives include create gateways to the community and improve signage; enhance safety of existing neighborhoods; and buffer existing and new neighborhoods from industrial areas.
- Promote economic and business development. -- Objectives include provide job opportunities for large industry and retail, as well as small, local businesses;

support job training; encourage a greater variety of restaurants, shops, and entertainment destinations.

- Improve transportation connections for all. -- Objectives include promote safe pedestrian and bicycle facilities that do not conflict with industrial movement; relocate the train station to become a more convenient and appealing facility; encourage development of a multimodal train/bus/bike/walk hub; and improve bus service within Claymont.
- Increase the network of open space and recreation facilities. -- Objectives include provide more public open space and recreation facilities, including parks; designate public open space on the waterfront; continue the East Coast Greenway; and provide more off-road trails.
- Encourage design that enhances the existing community context. -- Objectives include promote mixed-use transit-oriented development; preserve and respect the history of the area; and limit visibility of surface parking lots and encourage structured parking.
- Foster a variety of housing. -- Objectives include encourage housing for 55+ and assisted living facilities. Include development of housing for a variety of incomes; and plan for residential areas with views of the waterfront; protect and restore the environment. -- Objectives include enhance Naamans Creek waterway and minimize air, water, and sound pollution.

All the goals and objectives scored well with stakeholders. During the first public open house meeting roundtable discussions the goals were prioritized. Creating a safe and welcoming community got the highest rating (rated highest on paper survey), and economic development and access to jobs (rated highest on online survey). Slightly lower priorities included transportation connections and good design. What people like best is the location and surrounding area; sense of community; and the revitalization of the Claymont area. Main concerns centered on crime and safety; lack of visually appealing areas; and pedestrian connections.

Other concerns include pedestrian access to the train station and public access to the Delaware River port area. They are also concerned about the condition of housing and there is a large rental area that will need to be preserved.

The master plan next steps are: June-December 2015 — (Task 1) analyze existing conditions and create a real estate assessment; November 2015-February 2016 (public meeting #1) — establish goals and create scenarios; spring 2016 (public meeting #2) — evaluate scenarios; and summer-fall 2016 (public meeting #3) — select preferred scenario and develop the final master plan. Other ongoing projects include: First State Crossing; Train Station Relocation Study; Port Feasibility Study; Darley Green Development; and Sunoco Logistics Expansion.

Mr. Valenzuela said regarding public outreach methods, perhaps the PAC members would like to look at the Facebook page at the next PAC meeting. Ms. Zegeye said it is a personal preference and not everyone uses Facebook. Mr. Singer suggested a short e-mail including the WILMAPCO web address would be helpful.

## **7. Other Business:**

**8:50 PM**

Mr. Singer said regarding Route 141, the cost of the installation is about \$3,000 per mile, on a heavily travelled route, with a 20% payout on reduction. If you can translate this into dollars you may capture some attention.

Ms. Schultz said there are two port studies, one of which is being done privately. She asked why this study isn't being funded by WILMAPCO. Ms. Dunigan said WILMAPCO gets involved in freight planning; however, WILMAPCO's funding is mainly for surface transportation, and our ability to fund a port study is limited.

**8. Adjournment:**

**9:00 PM**